Are Teachers Really Necessary?

Once again as we bravely delve into scripture that seems at first glance to be contradictory we find that as always there is a 'simple, yet profound' explanation. With today's article God has provided guidance into just what the role of the teacher is in the life of the Christian.

> **But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him.**
> **1 John 2:27 (KJV)**

If one were to take this scripture by itself they might be tempted to think there is no need for teachers at all in the lives of Christians, but is that really the case?

> **I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able.**
> **1 Corinthians 3:2 (KJV)**

Paul employs the 'milk or meat' metaphor several times in his writings and it is worth reflecting upon a bit. Milk is provided by the mother for their young in many types of mammals. These newborns are physically unable to digest adult foods like meat because their digestive systems are not yet fully developed.

> **For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.**
> **Hebrews 5:13-14 (KJV)**

There is no shame in the newly reborn Christian not being able to fully digest scripture; it is clearly a skill which is developed through use. Similarly, an infant's digestive system as it grows and naturally develops becomes able to digest meat gradually over time.

> **For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat.**
> **Hebrews 5:12 (KJV)**

Paul here points the finger at those who although they have had ample time have not developed this skill. They are so unskilled in fact that they need to have the basics taught to them again and again, not digesting even the most simple of teachings. Verse 11 tells us that these were 'dull of hearing'. Likewise, anyone who has spent time around a baby knows that they tend to spit up easily especially as their systems are adjusting to dietary changes. They are moved from milk to strained foods as soon as they are able. This is similar to nature where

birds regurgitate their partially digested meals to feed their young who are not quite ready to handle meat yet.

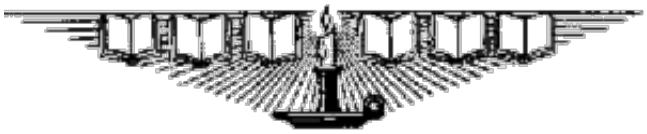
> **And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:**
> **Ephesians 4:11-13 (KJV)**

Some of us seem to have the mistaken idea that there is a group missing from this list: those who just sit and perpetually absorb all the things that these apostles, prophets and teachers are saying. But the key to fully understanding **Hebrews 5:12** is the realization that Paul fully expected every Christian to eventually become a teacher as a matter of course as part of their salvation! Once we have developed this skill in God's Word I believe that every single one of us should fall into at least one of those categories of apostle, prophet, teacher etc. Paul addresses this thought more directly in his metaphor of the body of Christ in Romans 12 and 1st Corinthians 12.

> **For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues: But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.**
> **1 Corinthians 12:8-11 (KJV)**

Several of these gifts are given to 'every man' in the body of Christ, nobody is left out! You've probably heard the saying regarding the difference between giving a man a fish and teaching him to fish. Spiritually speaking we are all called to minister in some way, to be 'fishers of men' and to minister to the body of Christ. Yet even in Paul's day there were those who were stuck on milk when they should have long been on meat and teaching others and getting them off the milk and onto the meat.

> **Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.**
> **2 Timothy 3:7 (KJV)**

The teacher's job is to get their students independent as soon as possible, but this role not just in the body of Christ but most all institutions has been corrupted. Any teacher worth their salt teaches their students to think for themselves. But our institutions of higher learning and now even our churches spit out mindless slaves to their systems. They produce followers who are never taught to think for themselves or question the status quo but to get all the answers they need from others. Just sit quietly and hand in your tithes.

So yes, we do indeed need teachers for a time to get us onto the meat of the Word. And of course, we are continually learning throughout our walk with Christ and we certainly can learn from sharing with others. However God never meant for us to perpetually depend on any other person or ministry to feed us week after week, year after year, or to spend our entire spiritual lives stuck on milk. We must feed ourselves. The sooner we get off the milk the sooner we become as the Bereans who were commended for their skill in digesting the Word for themselves (**Acts 17:10-11 KJV**).